



# THE STREET BEAT

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Thank you for picking up this issue of the Street Beat! This is Pennsbury School District's music magazine. The Street Beat is now a student run organization, where students pick the article topics and write the articles. We hope that you learn something from every article in this issue and that this magazine will help you broaden your musical horizons. In our second year of publication, we hope to have more issues and more articles about the topics YOU want to read about.

If you would like to contribute to the Street Beat on a regular basis and you are in an instrumental music ensemble at the High School, please sign up for the band EOP, as this is an EOP activity. We are always in need of writers and editors! Also, you can submit articles without being a member of the EOP by dropping them off in Sylvia Biscoveanu's mailbox in the PHS East band room. Now read on to get to know our editors:

### SYLVIA BISCOVEANU

I am very excited to be editor in chief of the new Street Beat! I have been playing violin since I was five and I started playing viola in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I am in the school orchestra, as well as the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra. I also participate in a string quartet here at the high school. In addition to playing violin, I also enjoy reading, playing tennis, and skiing, but my favorite activity is spending quality time with my AP United States History textbook.



### ALANA PAPULA

Alana Papula is an amazing type. Not only does she play violin, bass, and Zoo Tycoon, but she has also allegedly solved Einstein's unsolvable riddle. Ms. Papula is excited to contribute to this publication and count it as a community service activity, having come to the rescue of a dear friend in need of assistance. Ms. Papula is in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, participates in the symphony orchestra here in the chamber room, and also plays for the symphony orchestra division of YOBC. When she is not doing any of the aforementioned things, Ms. Papula is completing physics sets, showering, or taking food from one restaurant and eating it in another.

### JON COTTONE



Hailing from a place formally known as the New World, the handsome 11<sup>th</sup> grade bass player, Jon Cottone, from the Pennsbury High School Orchestra enjoys feeding ducks, bass of all sort, and diet Arnold Palmer. Despite starting upright bass in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade he has made it to counties, districts and regionals for orchestra, which has given him quite the experience to write for the high school renowned Street Beat.

## ZAC COHEN

Hi I'm Zac Cohen. I'm a sophomore here at PHS. I play piano, viola, and violin, but I play viola in Symphonic Orchestra. I like to chill with friends and mess around in my free time. I am also in YOBC and I like all kinds of music as long as it is not blues.



## KAELYN PARRY



My name is Kaelyn Parry and I am a viola player. I have been playing in Pennsbury Orchestras for 6 years. I am also part of the Long Orange Line Color Guard. My favorite music includes classical (especially Telemann) and the Vitamin String Quartet. In my spare time, I like to spend time with friends, sing, and read. I look forward to bringing you the Music News of Pennsbury in the coming year!

## DASHIELL PAPULA

My name is Dashiell Papula. I have been involved in music for the past eight years. I play the cello, piano, and guitar. I am part of the Youth Orchestra of Bucks County and go to Point CounterPoint music camp every summer. My favorite musical genres are classical and rock. I'm glad to help write for Street Beat this year and look forward to the experience.

## EVAN SCHNURR

My name is Evan Schnurr and I am the epitome of a band geek. I play saxophone in the marching band, 1<sup>st</sup> chair clarinet in 9<sup>th</sup> grade band, and can't hold a steady conversation unless the subject includes favorite composers and the best types of reeds. In what little free time I have, I enjoy attempting to play sports, eating WAWA hoagies and quoting The Big Bang Theory. I look forward to being part of the Pennsbury music program and contributing my writing skills to Street Beat Magazine.



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# NEWS

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## **Pennsbury High School Symphony Orchestra** by Miss Reilly and Mr. Mazzeo

New to Pennsbury School District this year is the addition of an auditioned orchestra, the Symphonic Orchestra. The Symphonic Orchestra (strings only) meets the same day as Symphonic Winds (band only) during D period on Day 1's, to rehearse separately as Symphonic Orchestra and Symphonic Winds. The two curricular ensembles are open to 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students must perform a successful audition into either of these ensembles in which auditions take place during the spring of the previous school year.

The Symphonic Orchestra and Symphonic Winds are then combined to form the Pennsbury High School Symphony Orchestra. The Pennsbury High School Symphony Orchestra is "team taught" and under the direction of Ms. Felicia Reilly and Mr. Frank Mazzeo.

The debut concert of the Pennsbury Symphonic Orchestra and the Pennsbury Symphony Orchestra is December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and will take place in the Pennsbury High School East Auditorium. We are extremely excited about this new course and are looking forward to this upcoming concert.

## Districts Practice Tip Palooza by Jon Cottone

With the auditions for the PMEA District 11 ensembles right around the corner on December 8<sup>th</sup>, expert auditioner and practicer Jon Cottone shares his best tips.

- 1) Set a time and place to practice! Consistency is absolutely crucial, so pick the same time and place to practice every day. For example, I practice in my room at around 8 o'clock at night, and I can personally vouch that the consistency helps. Remember, though, if you miss a day or something is switched up, it is okay! Just get right back on musical track!
- 2) Clear your mind! In Mathematics class if your mind isn't clear than you cannot learn and do practice problems; thus you cannot get better. The same thing applies with your practice. Clear your mind to make every scale and every dynamic practiced count. Relax and just breathe!
- 3) Get rid of your distractions! That's right, turn off the TV and the cell phone. Electronics are often the worst distraction and can make a practice session go from jolly and productive to dull and unsatisfactory.
- 4) Have a solid warm-up. This should always come first and be consistent. Personally, mine includes whole tones and scales. Customize yours to care for your needs but generally keeping it slow helps, like a turtle.
- 5) Have a plan! Each practice session, make sure you know what you are doing! Put scales first, then a piece or repertoire, but you can switch it up to keep things interesting. Interesting will keep you practicing.
- 6) Have fun! That is why you play your instrument.

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## Marching Band Happenings by Kaelyn Parry

This year the Pennsbury Long Orange Line had an awesome season. Mr. Mazzeo once again pushed all members to their musical- and physical- limit with the challenging field show that was put together. Based on the theme of Angels and Demons, the show featured intense music flying through time signatures, key signatures, and distinctive themes. Angels and Demons also came on the field in the form of the color guard, which was divided into two battling halves. The show featured drills designed by Michael Russ. Throughout the competition season, Pennsbury consistently topped their scores musically, and grew exponentially in other areas. The season culminated with a band festival at home, with five attending guest bands. The marching band grew so much this year, because honestly, with 50 incoming freshman, it's hard not to grow! On behalf of the entire band, thank you to Mr. Mazzeo, Mr Cappriotti, and Ms. Reilly for directing the band. I would also like to send a shout out to all the seniors. Thank you so much for your part in this awesome season, and we will all miss you!

## Upcoming Concerts

by Miss Reilly and Sylvia Biscoveanu

Band and Orchestra students alike are facing a busy concert season. The Symphony Orchestra will be making its debut on December 19<sup>th</sup>, playing works by Mendelssohn and Bernstein. The PMEA season is fast approaching, with the first concert being that of the District 11 Orchestra on January 12<sup>th</sup>. We hope that you can come see our talented students in action at one of the performances listed below.

11/19/12- Marching Band Indoor Concert @ 7:30 pm, PHS East Auditorium

11/22/12- Marching Band @ Thanksgiving Day Parade in Philadelphia

12/3/12- PHS Symphonic Orchestra Performance @ School Board Meeting

12/6 & 12/7/12- Holly Nights Small Ensemble Performances @ Pennsbury Manor

12/8/12- PMEA District 11 Auditions

12/15/12- Pennsbury Community Band @ 1 pm, PHS East Auditorium

12/19/12- Orchestra Winter Concert @ 7:30 pm, PHS East Auditorium

1/12/13- PMEA District 11 Orchestra Concert @ Central Bucks East Auditorium

1/23/13- Band Winter Concert @ 7:30 pm, PHS East Auditorium

1/26/13- PMEA District 11 Band Concert @ Cheltenham High School

## Catching up with... Mr. Carpino

By Sylvia Biscoveanu

Mr. Carpino is a student at the University of the Arts and a student teacher for the Pennsbury Bands. He shared with me his musical experience so far, and what he hopes to accomplish in the future.

1. What instrument do you play and what motivated you to start playing?

I play the trumpet, and it has been my passion since the 4th grade. Originally I wanted to play the drums, but there was an influx of drummers, so my elementary school teacher, Ms. Sue Uzilmier, asked if I would try trumpet, and I've been playing ever since.

2. What is your favorite aspect of attending University of the Arts and why?

My favorite aspect of uArts has to be the tight-knit community. As a student, you feel as if each teacher really cares about your education. They have a very comfortable learning environment, and [the teachers] go out of their way to make sure you are succeeding. I have made so many connections through uArts, and I believe this is due to the amazing faculty, as well as their constant efforts to further your education and career.

3. Who is your musical inspiration and why?

I have many musical inspirations, but the one that really made me serious about the trumpet, is a man I've come to be great friends with, Matt Gallagher. He is a freelance trumpet player in the Philadelphia area, and a music educator as well. He is an extremely high- in- demand lead trumpet player, and one of the best all around trumpet players. Matt performs with many different musical groups, [the] most notable being the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philadelphia Pops. In high school I started lessons with Matt, and ever since then I have been trying to follow in his footsteps. He is an amazing musician, an incredible trumpet player, very insightful educator, and a great friend. Matt has inspired me for quite some time now to keep striving for the best.

4. What is the most useful thing you've learned from your experience at Pennsbury so far?

The most useful thing I have learned in my time with Pennsbury is that teaching needs more than just instruction, it needs passion. I am very analytical, so I like to understand why things work and behave the way they do. I have found myself lecturing about music, when the best way to teach is through performance. You can talk all day about the difference between a *mp* and *f* dynamic, but until the student hears and experiences the difference, it won't mean anything. My passion has always been performing, so why not teach through that passion?

5. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

In 10 years I plan to be stationed in D.C. with The U.S. Airmen of Note, The U.S. Navy Commodores, or the U.S. Army Blues. This has been a passion of mine for a very long time, and I will do everything I can to get there!

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## REVIEWS

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### Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 1 by Zac Cohen

Tchaikovsky wrote his first symphony, also known as the *Winter Daydreams* symphony, at the age of 26, and it was his first notable work. The first two movements create a mood of riding through Russia on a beautiful winter day with soaring melodies and rhythmic harmony. Although Tchaikovsky slaved over the symphony and was almost driven mad by working night and day on it, some criticized it for being too immature. His declining mental state is reflected in the second movement's climax where the melody is in a minor key and the intensity of the section is unbelievably high. Throughout the piece, the melody is passed equally between the sections, each one being able to make the way they play it unique from the rest. This, along with the flowing melodies and the ability to create vivid scenes of winter in the listener's mind help make this a Tchaikovsky symphony that will not be soon forgotten.

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# OPINION

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## The Horror of an Audition by Evan Schnurr

When someone asks me what the greatest thing in the world is, the first idea that comes to my mind is always auditions. Haha, yeah right! As a musician, I know that it doesn't matter how well I can play a piece, how many scales I know, or how many hours a day I practice. I am always going to screw something up in the audition, whether it's important or not. In last year's Middle School Honors Band I had gotten third chair-oh the horror!-due to the fact that I suddenly seemed to forget the intervals of a scale while I was halfway through playing each scale. That's why when I received this year's jazz band saxophone audition packet, thoughts about punching someone immediately came to my mind.

The dreaded PCJB packet weighed about 4 tons, included approximately 72 varieties of scales and contained instructions to improvise over chord progressions I had never heard of. Worst of all, I had to play a piece entitled "Cherry Juice" at 224 beats per minute in an entirely wrong key from which it was recorded. And I had to know all of it by the end of the month. I should have just stuck with clarinet, I told myself.

I was able to sightread the piece-at about half the tempo at which it was written, of course. Over the next few weeks, I didn't practice for the audition nearly as much as I could have (and should have), until my friend Hurricane Sandy came along. As most of the East Coast's light was going out, a light bulb went on in my head: I could use all this extra time to practice for my audition! I retreated to my enclave in the basement and practiced like a madman, perfecting every single line of every single song. Even my scales were spot-on, which is almost never the case.

I walked into the band room on my audition day feeling great. I knew I would nail this audition just like I did with my 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Band seating audition, and I was even more comforted by the fact that some people there didn't know how to improvise. I ran through "Cherry Juice" a few times, each run-through sounding better than the last. However, when my name was called, my heart unexplainably began beating and I felt the presence of my arch-nemesis: nerves.

I was discomforted to find that my audition was in the Smart Music room, an area where I always seemed to play worse, but I shrugged off any negative thoughts and walked in there thinking "I've got this." The scales went smoothly enough, considering I was confused the whole time about whether they were in concert pitch or not. It was when I got to "Cherry Juice" that my audition completely hit a wall. After playing the intro correctly, which almost never happens, I stumbled through the rest of the music, which also rarely happens. It sounded and felt like I was sightreading, rather than playing a piece I had rehearsed countless times. With an unimpressed look on his face, Mr. Capriotti played a blues backing track and then the play-along to all the things you are, both of which I soloed over. Improv has always been my strong point in playing jazz, and it saved my audition that day. The teachers in the room seemed to approve of that facet, but a couple of approving looks couldn't conceal the fact that I had just had a disappointing audition.

When asked about the audition afterwards, my reply was "pretty decent, I guess." I knew if I had had another chance to play, then I would have redeemed myself, but that's not how the instrumental music world works. So now, as I anxiously wait for the brass players to finish their auditions and the results to come in, I can only hope for the best.



### Musical Term of the Month...

**Quodlibet (Latin, noun)- a composition that uses famous melodies played either one after another or simultaneously**

## Transcending Musical Boundaries by Alana Papula

After playing violin in orchestra for many years of my life, I wanted to try something new, something cool, and something with no risk of getting a baton stuck in my eye. Thus my only option was electric bass. I started playing in May, and the transition has been easier than I expected, though the cultures that accompany the two instruments differ tremendously.

Learning violin, I started picking out songs by ear but quickly progressed to reading music. I spent the rest of my violin career losing any skill I'd acquired in the arena of ear training. However, I've since discovered that rock bassists don't read music but rather use a pathetic system called "tab," in which the strings are drawn out on a piece of paper and fret numbers are marked as they come in the song. No rhythm or rests are included. At first, I looked upon this system with disdain. I still do. But, I've realized that if I can find a tab for the song I'm playing, I should consider myself lucky. The tabs online are wrought with errors and it takes a long time to sort through to confirm which notes are right and which ones must be corrected, but nonetheless these tabs provide a base; they're a lot better than nothing. Why? Because when I can't find a tab, I have to listen to the song over and over again and figure out which notes are being played. Perhaps that doesn't sound so bad, but the fact of the matter is I can't hear the bass in songs. Call it a violinist's superiority complex, but I get way too wrapped up in the higher notes of the guitar when I listen. Whether my ears or the quality of my computer's speakers are to blame, I either can't tell the bass guitar from the drums or miss it entirely. Therefore, most of the time I just guess wildly at the notes until someone helps me figure it out. I don't worry; people are happy to tell me when I'm "WRONG!"

Not to say that I have a low opinion of the bass; I like it quite well and my violin training has enabled me to pick up the new instrument pretty quickly. Some of the skills that have come in handy are, for example, my sense of rhythm, which is vital for bass-players, especially when the drums haven't entered yet. What's more, I can read music (though I had to learn a new clef), and this comes in handy whenever I play classical music, which is never. But most importantly, my brief knowledge of scales and music theory is vital to my playing. Unlike the guitarists, strumming away on the same old cord, bass players need to devise creative bass lines that fit in with the key, the chord, and the mood of the piece. We also must transition smoothly from one chord-outline to another. Of course, I can't do any of this stuff yet because I'm applying to college and can't practice as much as I'd like to, but I bet if you asked bass master like Jon Cottone, he could tell you all about it.

### Musical Jokes by Dashiell Papula

What do you get when you drop a piano down a mine shaft? A flat minor!

You can tune a bass but you can't tuna fish!

Why did the chicken cross the road?  
To get away from the bassoon recital!

What is the definition of a half step?  
Two oboes playing in unison!

#### Contributors:

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Jon Cottone

Zac Cohen

Kaelyn Parry

Dashiell Papula

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#### Advisors:

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Ms. Felicia Reilly- Director of Orchestras, Pennsbury High School, Quarry Hill and Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary schools; Associate Director, Pennsbury Marching Band; Director, Middle School Honors Orchestra